22 May 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Yugoslav Ambassador's Comments at Cooperative Forum Meeting, 21 May 1958

1. This memorandum reports the hightlights of last night's meeting and after-session of the Cooperative Forum on the subject "How Can We Minimize the Danger of Accidental War." The panel of speakers at this meeting was composed of: Brigadier General Thomas D'Arcy, U.S. Air Force; Mr. Philip Deane, correspondent for the London Observer; Dr. Hugh Darby, physicist, and Dr. Leo Mat es, Ambassador of Yugoslavia. The members of the panel spoke in that order and Dr. Darby acted as Chairman.

2. As is customary at the Forum, the panel speakers made presentations of about ten minutes each, and the audience was then called upon for questions. Because of the particular interest of the remarks of Ambassador Mat es and because he was the most articulate and informative speaker, the remarks of the other members of panel are not reported here. In general it may be said that they handled the subject adequately if not illuminatingly and were in general agreement that the prevention of an accidental war was not merely a matter of devising safety devices or techniques but of creating a political climate which would make accidents less likely. This view led directly into most of Mat es' remarks which were largely in answer to questions of a broadly political or ideological character.

3. The gist of some of the more significant of Mat es' comments is as follows:

a. Of course the Soviets do not want an accidental war any more than we do, but they would probably be no more willing to sit down and discuss tangible measures for preventing such an outbreak than they were to discuss the recent U.S. proposal for counter-inspection in the Arctic. The U.S. gained considerable political prestige by reason of the 10-1 vote in the U.N. Security Council rejecting the Soviet complaint against the U.S. Thus it might be to the psychological advantage of the U.S. to re-invite the Soviet Union to a more

Copies to:
DDI
[redacted]
Matt Baird

limited discussion concerned solely with the prevention of unpremeditated war. If they changed their attitude and accepted, so much the better. If not, the U.S. would again be showing the world that she is serious about negotiating for peace and disarmament. The USSR has apparently been able to convince many neutral people that we really do not want to negotiate a peace settlement with them.

b. Despite Sputnik and ICBM successes, the Russians are still very much afraid of the U.S. and the Western alliances. The "scared men in the Kremlin" of a few years back are undoubtedly much more confident of their strength now, but are still far from convinced that they have so marked a superiority over the West that they can afford to relax in the thought that they will never be attacked.

c. Anyone who has dealt with the Russians over any long period of time must realize that there can be no compromise on their part on any issues involving fundamental ideology or the present power position of the Soviet Union. To approach negotiations with them, with any hope of such compromise, is naive and self-defeating. This does not mean, however, that on secondary or lesser issues some agreement can not be reached. Austria is an example. So was the Korean armistice even though the USSR was nominally not involved. (In this case the USSR really wanted to disengage from Kim-il-Sung just as the United States presumably wanted to disengage from Synghman Rhee).

d. The process of negotiating with the Russians required endless patience and endurance. It is part of the Soviet technique to wear down the other side until it makes more concessions than it wanted to. But if one can "stick it out" long enough, eventually the Soviet negotiations will come around to agreements on the non-basic questions.

e. Are the Russians "sincere"? Americans and Westerners usually ask this question. The answer should be quite apparent. They are undoubtedly sincere, unswervingly so, in the devotaon to the achievemtnt of their objectives. They feel therefore that whatever they do to gain their objectives is just as sincere as it can be. If Westerners feel that the Russians are being "insincere", it is because they do not understand the nature of the Soviet regime's ideology, purpose and modus operandi.

f. The negotiation of any agreement or contract in international as well as private affairs must necessarily be based on an assumption of good faith, or at least good intentions, on the part of both contractors. If this were not so, then there would be no point in trying at all to negotiate. On the other hand if there is a condition of unchangeable, everlasting good faith there would logically be no need for an agreement. Thus all parties to an agreement implicitly assume that there may be contingencies which will cause non-fulfillment. When dealing with the Russians this is particularly true. Thus we must not assume that nothing can be done but on the other hand we must not be so optimistic as to expect everything.

g. The intellectual ferment within the Soviet Union is significant. Even though it is repressed or studiously neutralized by the regime the fact that, compared to the days of Stalin, it exists at all, is important. This is particularly true of the longer-range implications of the dissent and questioning among students, who occupy so important a place in Soviet society and who are the leaders of the future. But we must not exaggerate the effects. There is no extensive "revolt of youth" within the USSR. As for the dissent of adults, the "intelligentsia," it is not comparable to that of Djilas in Yugoslavia. Djilas has questioned the fundamental premises of Marxism. The Soviet writers have criticized only certain aspects - usually the economic or the bureaucratic rather than the political - of Soviet society. None has challenged the ideological bases of the regime, nor truly questioned the supremacy of the Party.

h. Only the Soviet Union and the United States acting together can prevent lesser states from acquiring nuclear weapons which they might use irresponsibly and thus start an "accidental war."

4. The total impression of Ambassador Mattes, obtained by this listener, was that he is a man of profound conviction, personal integrity, high intelligence and flexibility of view, cultured and articulate (and completely fluent in English). He does not deny being an ideological Communist, devoted to the Yugoslav way of achieving "socialism," but unlike the Soviet leaders, he acknowledges the evolutionary character of capitalism (as well as of socialism if allowed to develop freely and not as it is in the Soviet Union). He appears to be completely convinced that capitalist and socialist states can truly co-exist and work together for the betterment of mankind.

TRANSMITTAL SLIP	DATE 16 [illegible] 57
TO: [redacted]	
ROOM NO. 221	BUILDING Admin

REMARKS 25X1A9a

Please return.

DBD

Thanks - Shouldn't DDI be on this?

FROM: for Chief, SRS/DDI

ROOM NO. 304	BUILDING 2210 E St	EXTENSION 2455

FORM NO. 241 REPLACES FORM 36-8
1 FEB 55 WHICH MAY BE USED. (47)